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3,000 'Hams' View Display

Latest in Civilian and Military Radio Equipment Inspected

About 3,000 "ham" radio operators Saturday night inspected the latest in civilian and military radio communications equipment on display in the Auditorium. They were members of the American Radio Relay league which opened its national convention Saturday morning.

The "hams" were given a display of the latest military radio developments by 27 communications technicians from the 32nd division. The soldiers displayed a mobile communications center as well as field radios and walkie talkies.

The soldiers, who contacted other amateur radio stations, used amateur call letters in the demonstration but explained that under field conditions, military bands would be used.

40% Aided in War

John Doyle, convention chairman for the Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' club, which is host to the league, explained that the purpose of the demonstration was to interest young amateur radio operators in careers in military service.

Much of radio's advancement, he said, could be attributed to work done by amateur operators. He said that during the war 40% of the 68,000 licensed "hams" were engaged in some radio war activity.

The army display was outside of the Auditorium. The Auditorium arena was filled with displays of the latest commercial radio developments set up by manufacturers of radio equipment.

Admiral Lauds "Hams"

Saturday afternoon, Rear Admiral Earl E. Stone, chief of naval communications and a former Milwaukeean, told the ARRL members that the training and resourcefulness of amateurs had proved invaluable to the navy during the war.

Stone, who commanded the battleship Wisconsin from March, 1944, until March, 1945, said that there had been about 8,500 "hams" in the navy in World War II. He said they had been the nucleus of the expanded naval communications system.

"The amateur radio operators—the civilian "hams"—were some of the most resourceful men I commanded in the last war," Stone said.

"The hams know how to make the most out of very little equipment," he added. "They have the know how to get things done." He said amateur radio men were put in responsible jobs in the navy, often without any training except their own experience. Many were brought into the navy as officers or with advanced enlisted men's ratings, he said.

Since the war, a number of the "hams" have been retained in the naval reserve.

"The hams have a natural aptitude for communications work," he declared. "They are invaluable to the navy in war and in peace."

Stone has been chief of naval communications since January, 1946. He attended Riverside high school and Milwaukee State Normal school and was a student at the University of Wisconsin for a year before entering the naval academy in 1913. His mother, Mrs. Catherine A. Stone, lives at 544 N. 17th st.

Mayor Zeidler welcomed the visitors Saturday afternoon and urged them to co-operate with such civilian groups as Milwaukee's civil disaster relief committee. He said that local "hams" would be called on to provide emergency communications if normal communications lines were disrupted.

Gov. Rennebohm welcomed the radio men to Wisconsin in a radio broadcast Saturday night.

"We are especially glad to have people here from all parts of the world during our centennial year," the governor said.

About 400 members from Wisconsin registered Saturday, according to Doyle.